

INDEX CARD DEFINITION

Choose the definition that best supports understanding of informational text. Discuss your choice with your table members. Does your choice change? Do other's choices change? If you had to write a definition, would it include parts of the many definitions? What does Informational Text really look like for grades 9-12?

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Some researchers see informational text as a broad category that some call nonfiction and some call informational.

Informational text is a type of nonfiction—a very important type. Nonfiction includes any text that is factual. (Or, by some definitions, any type of literature that is factual, which would exclude texts such as menus and street signs.)

Carol Donovan and Laura Smolkin (2002) suggest informational text is a hybrid genre where the content may appear in the inset or diagram around a running storyline.

For grades 6-12, an informational text includes “subgenres of exposition, argument, and functional text in the form of personal essays, speeches, opinion pieces, essays about art or literature, biographies, memoirs, journalism, and historical, scientific, technical, or economic accounts (including digital sources) written for a broad audience.”

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The definition that Nell Duke (2000a) uses is “text written with the primary purpose of conveying information about the natural and social world (typically from someone presumed to be more knowledgeable on the subject to someone presumed to be less so) and having particular text features to accomplish this purpose.”

Christine Pappas’s (2006) recent analysis of information text identified four elements: topic presentation, descriptive attributes, characteristic events, and final summary, along with several optional elements. If texts included these elements, she labeled them “typical” information books.

Informational text conveys information about the natural or social world, typically from someone presumed to know that information to someone who does not. Features include headings and technical vocabulary.

Informational text is nonfiction writing, written with the intention of informing the reader about a specific topic. This is typically found in magazines, science or history books, autobiographies, and instruction manuals. They are written in way that allows the reader to easily find key information, and understand the main topic.